



WHATCOM COUNTY
EXECUTIVE ORDER 2004-05

**AMENDMENT TO UNIFORM FEE SCHEDULE
WHATCOM COUNTY SUPERIOR COURT
COURTHOUSE FACILITATOR**

WHEREAS, the Courthouse Facilitators presently see in excess of 4,000 in-office clients per year, for scheduled appointments and walk-in appointments, for no charge; and

WHEREAS, RCW 26.12.240 authorizes Clerks and Courts to charge a Courthouse Facilitator user fee up to \$10.00 to pay for the Courthouse Facilitator Program; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BY VIRTUE OF THE POWER VESTED IN ME BY THE HOME RULE CHARTER FOR WHATCOM COUNTY, I hereby order that the Whatcom County is authorized to charge \$10.00 per scheduled appointment and \$5.00 for a walk-in consultation with each Courthouse Facilitator client. This and is to take place immediately.

Dated this 17TH day of August, 2004.


Pete Kremen, Whatcom County Executive


**Whatcom County
Superior Court**
311 Grand Avenue
Bellingham, Washington 98225
(360) 676-7688



N.F. Jackson
Whatcom County Clerk
Superior Court Administrator
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MEMO TO: Pete Kremen, County Executive

FROM: N.F. Jackson 

DATE: August 13, 2004

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**PETE KREMEN
COUNTY EXECUTIVE**

SUBJECT: *New User Fee – Courthouse Facilitator Consultations*

The Courthouse Facilitator program costs us approximately \$100,000 annually, serving 9,000 contacts. Filing fee surcharges cover some \$38,550 of the operating costs.

Of the 9,000 contacts, approximately 4,000 are individuals who receive face-to-face consultations, either by scheduling a 40-minute appointment or receiving the benefit of a 10-minute walk-in consultation. The balance of the contacts is telephonic.

We propose and request that effective September 1, 2004, we begin collecting user fees for the face-to-face consultations. We propose to collect \$5.00 for each walk-in consultation and \$10.00 for each longer appointment. A conservative estimate of the new user fee revenue is \$15,000, believing that the number of appointments and walk-in's will decrease when the applicant is faced with a fee.

The anticipated reduction in the number of contacts is an intended result as too many clients use the appointments unwisely, often requesting help when all they needed to have done was print their own name in the blank, etc. These clients come back time and time again because they are apparently unwilling to do the self-help work to make the most of valuable consultation appointments. It is hoped that by reducing the number of appointments per client the Facilitators will actually be able to help more individuals.

We request that you enter an Executive Order establishing the fee and that the fee be added to the Unified Fee Schedule at the next opportunity. We enclose a draft executive order for your consideration.